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MY RECOGNITION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY by Y. T. Wu

(from Tien Feng for June 30, 1958)

Without the Communist Party there would not be the New China; without the Communist Party there would not be the general line of socialist construction and this infinitely bright outlook for the Chinese people, there would not have been the earth-shaking events of the past few years, a consummation to which all previous ages have aspired.

Without the Communist Party there would not have been the Three Self Movement of the Christian Church, nor the new life of the church, and we Christians would not have received education in socialism, and the opportunity to surrender our hearts to the Communist Party, to change our political standpoint and become one with the people as we march happily on the road to Socialism.

As for myself, it took considerable time and pains to arrive at these conclusions, it was not easily arrived at. I came from the small capitalist class, and was for a long time influenced by capitalist and imperialist thinking, and thus for a long time looked upon matters from a capitalist point of view. But partly because of my own subjective efforts and partly through the careful education of the Party, my thinking and viewpoint were gradually changed, and today I can say that my recognition of the Communist Party is not just a superficial or academic one, but one of personal sympathy and affection.

I

At the time of the Great Revolution (1925-27) I was in America. On my return in 1927 my head was filled with pro-America, anti-Communist and anti-Soviet ideas. Like many other fuzzy thinking people, I looked upon the Communist Party as a great disaster.

But although I opposed the Party, I was eager for the establishment of an "ideal society". In 1930 I wrote, "Christians should bring about a fundamental revolution in society, to make it more ideal, and in accord with the Kingdom of Heaven." But as to how to change society, my mind was a blank sheet of paper.

The affair of September 18, 1931 (the Mukden attack by Japan) awoke me from this dream. In an article written in 1934, I said, "We have reached the end of an era..... The change from an individualistic to a socialistic order will shortly become inevitable..... The strength of capitalism today is only a pale reflected strength, while the strength of Communism is increasing day by day." But my thinking was still anti-Communistic, and so in that article I said, "We sympathize with the purposes of the Communist Party, but we cannot approve their methods." But as

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to what methods should be used for the reform of society I had only the vaguest idea.

In 1936, on the eve of the anti-Japanese War, my thinking took another step forward. In an article at that time I wrote, "We aver that the China of today needs a social revolution, one tha will change this society based on selfishness, laissez faire, and competition, and therefore producing exploitation, oppression and inequality, into one in which there will be equality in labor, in the fruits of labor, in possessions and in power." I disavowed the "reformism" that would make the China question merely one of dealing with poverty, ignorance, weakness and selfishness. But I still thought that materialism (that is, Communism) since it only emphasized the change of social organization and did not emphasize moral character, was wrong.

II

How was I liberated from this anti-Communist thinking? First, the national crisis caused by Japanese aggression caused many of us who loved China to demand a vigorous resistance against Japan. I had been a pacifist (The Chinese term is "one who believes in love as the only way"), a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, a movement which had enlisted many sincere Christians in the West, but which had been made use of by imperialists to destroy the Christian will to revolution. Japanese aggression and the suffering of our people brought me to reject pacifism and favor military resistance. I enrolled in the resistance movement of Shen Chun-ju, and there I became acquainted with Communist thinking and Communists (It was only later that I knew that some of them were Party members). It was at this time that I realized that Communists really favored resistance, and so my attitude toward them began to change, and I began to look upon them as my friends, and China's only hope.

It was also at this time, as a result of the advanced thinking with which I came in contact, that I began to understand the imperialism that for a hundred years had been an aggressor in China and had brought untold grief to the Chinese people; it was this imperialism that was alway urging us to take an anti-Communist stand. I saw then what a hateful thing imperialism was, that it was the cause of wars, and the real enemy of the Chinese people.

I had a deep hatred of the Nationalist reactionary government. I hated their treasonous compromises, their indifferent resistance, and their reactionary policy of concentrating on stamping out civil resistance before dealing with foreign aggression. I hated their cruelty to the peopl and their persecution of radicals. And just because the Communist Party was the deadly enemy of this reactionary government, so my hatred of the Nationalist Party led me still more to sympathize with and support the Communist Party.

During the War I lived in Chengtu, and there I heard of many of the exploits of the Eighth Route Army, and read a great deal about the theories, the purposes and the policies of the Communist Party. I also took part in several movements that had as their purpose the overthrow of the evil Nationalist Government, and in these movements I came to sympathize still more fully with the Communist Party as the only power capable of liberating the Chinese people. It was at this time that my attitude toward the Communist Party reached a point of decisive change: from sympathy to admiration. This attitude of mine toward the Communist Party was daily becoming more evident, so that many persons within the church began to take toward me an attitude of suspicion and fear, and even of enmity.

During the War of Liberation my expectations were raised to a fever heat. Every day I waited for the communiques of the Liberation Army. As I saw their superhuman strength, how they were able to destroy the millions in the Nationalist Armies, and liberate the country both north and south of the Great River (that is, the Yangtze), the happiness in my heart was indescribable. What made me still happier was that American imperialism, although it exerted its utmost strength and spent many millions to support a reactionary government, still found itself helpless to be anything more than a vanguard to the Liberation Army.

During the Japanese War I had seen some of Mao Tse-tung's writings, such as "On Conducting a Long War," "The New Democracy," and "A Coalition Government," and at that time of intellectual confusion and pessimistic despair it was a heartening thing to see this acute analysis of the progress of war and revolution and this firm faith, it could not but arouse admiration for the writer. At this time too I read some books about materialism. After Liberation I read

still more works by Communist writers, especially Chairman Mao's "Realism", "On Contradictions", "On a People's Totalitarianism", and his position on "leaning to one side" and on America as a "paper tiger", and thus came to understand not only the high purpose of the Communist Party, but also came to a deeper understanding of the theoretical foundation of Communism, and its highly scientific and exact nature.

After Liberation the various enthusiastic campaigns which the Communist Party carried through showed me how it was able to take a divided country, one filled with the most critical problems, and by firm determination and painstaking care lead it step by step along a great highway in which every obstacle was removed and a laborious construction carried through. In regard to the methods of some of these campaigns, such as the Three Anti and the Five Anti Movements, I at one time expressed some doubt, but the ensuing revelations of fact showed me the correctness and necessity of every one of these campaigns. What especially impressed me and aroused me to admiration was the enlightened policy of the Party in its Resist America Help Korea campaign. I believe that this campaign not only was a high expression of internationalism toward a brother nation, and not only removed a danger and secured a peaceful future for the New China, but was also a decisive factor in securing the peace of the Far East, and indeed of the whole world.

In my more than twenty years of contact with the Communist Party, and especially since Liberation, I have come to the following understanding of its policies and methods.

1. The unified battle line: The Party wants to unify every possible source of strength for the construction of New China. Its unified battle line takes a union of farmers and workers as its foundation, and includes every tribe and every democratic party, as well as people belonging to no party. We of the religious world are also included. After Liberation the Party and the Government used every possible method to educate religious circles to oppose imperialism, and to help them throw off the influences of imperialism and reaction and eradicate counter-revolutionary elements, thus opening up a path of normal development for each religion. At the same time both Party and Government carried through a thorough-going policy of freedom of religious belief. In the New China, under the leadership of the Party, believers and unbelievers are all in one big family, believers and unbelievers may all work together for the establishment of a great socialistic society.

2. The People's Line: The Party has carried through an earth-shaking task in the Chinese Revolution, and its strength has come from the People's Line. For the Party's aim and its every act have been for the benefit of the people, and therefore it has secured the support of the people, it has liberated their strength, so that they have accomplished miracles which we could not even have dreamed of. Another expression of this People's Line is the policy of the Party in its practice of unifying, criticizing, and unifying again, its educational persuasion in dealing with contradictions among the people, so that negative elements are changed into positive elements. To think of the power of the Communist Party as totalitarian or despotic, as founded on violence and suppression is wholly unfounded and an indication of reactionary thinking. For the Party comes from the people and returns to the people, and so through the people it can display unlimited power.

(To be continued)

FURTHER DENUNCIATIONS AND ARRESTS

The harrying of certain church leaders in China continues unabated. To begin with the latest news, that in the November 17 Tien Feng, seven Christian leaders in Swatow were denounced and arrested. They are: Sun Wu-hsin, Hung Hsi-jung, Fang Shih-wen, Sun Lu-tien, Meh Kua-chou, Hung Hung-wei, Hsu Fu-sheng. In Shanghai three Little Flock leaders (imprisoned since 1956) were sentenced to severe terms: Li Yuan-ju and Wang P'ei-chen to 15 years, and Chang Yu-chih to 12 years. In Anhwei Suhsien a Church of Christ in China pastor Hsu T'ien-min was denounced and arrested. In Chekiang Yuyao a Church of Christ in China rural pastor Pao Cheh-hua was denounced. In Huhohaoteh, Inner Mongolia, Kao T'ai-yu and Ch'ao Chih-jung were denounced and arrested.

The October 22 Tien Feng has a three page article by Episcopal Bishop Cheng Chien-yeh attacking Yang Shao-t'ang, a leading preacher in Shanghai. He was connected with Chia Yu-ming's Spiritual Cultivation Seminary, and had a congregation of his own in what was formerly the Free Christian Church in Shanghai. Earlier he had been pastor of the Huang Ni Kang Church

in Nanking, where he had been accused of being a reactionary. After this he moved to Shangha and became as Bishop Cheng says a two-faced progressive. He even became assistant secretary of the Shanghai Three Self Committee. However, he has continued to support and defend such reactionaries as Wang Ming-tao of Peking and Kao Chien-kuo of Wenchow. He knew that Chia Yu-ming had a considerable sum in American banknotes hidden away, but when the latter protested that he did not have money enough to pay the taxes on the Seminary property and asked Baptist pastor Ch'i Ch'ing-ts'ai to intercede for the Seminary with the Three Self Committee, Yang Shao-t'ang allowed the request to go through without saying anything about the American banknotes, although as an officer of the Three Self Committee he should have reported what he knew.

The October 8 Tien Feng reports the breaking up of a ring of rightists "hidden" within the China Inland Mission churches of Yukan in Kiangsi. The leaders were Liu Wen-hsin and Wan Hsiu-p'in,, but at least six others were included in the denunciation. They are accused of enco aging a hope for Nationalist return to the mainland. They have taken in over a thousand new church members, but many of them are said to be disaffected and reactionary elements. They have also encouraged faith healing and the exorcism of demons. Wenchow Methodist Chih Hua-hsin and Chengtu Little Flock leader Liu Pen-yao have been denounced and arrested.

The September 22 Tien Feng tells of a Shantung Three Self organization meeting, at which the following were denounced as rightists: Wu Huan-hsin, Sang Liang-yang, Sun Kuei-fang, Ku Chin-nan, Cheng Tzu-hsiu, Kuo Ch'i-ch'ing. The August 25 number denounces Shanghai Seventh Day Adventists Chou K'ang-ling and Lin Yao-hsi, who have been active in publishing literature with a strong reactionary taint. The accusers suspect that a covert reference to the devil transforming himself into an angel of light is pointed at the Communist Party. They have apparently been arrested. Also arrested is the CIM pastor Wu Kuo-chi in Kweiyang.

In July a Shanghai meeting condemned Ch'ien T'uan-yuin, Li Han-wen, Ku Chu-en, Chou K'ang-ling, Yao Ts'ung-en, and Chu Ch'en-sheng. A special article is devoted to Li Han-wen, who was pastor of an independent church in Shanghai.

On April 9 Ai Ti-lai of Amoy was arrested. He is accused of trying to organize a Christian political party to overthrow the Communists.

NATIONALIST CHINA AND CHRISTIANITY

In the present international tensions it is understandable that Nationalist China should try to capitalize the difficulties of the Christian Church on the mainland for its own political purposes. While Hollington Tong was ambassador he made at least two statements along this line. In one, an article on Christianity in Red China in the Fall number (1958) of Asia Calling, he goes so far as to call the Christian Church in Red China neither Christian nor a church, but rather "an obscene police agency masquerading as Christianity, whose primary object is to keep the Chinese Christians under police observation."

In addressing a Christian youth group in Washington on October 21, 1957, he invited American support of the return to the mainland by practically promising that the Government would actively support the missionary program. "Once we are back, we will give Christianity the first place in our religious activities. Of course, the Government will not interfere in religious matters - our Constitution provides freedom of religion - but those who will direct the affairs of Sta will be largely Christians."

This was going too far, and a widespread attack on Mr. Tong took place in Nationalist circ in Taiwan and in Hong Kong, with articles assailing his statement in the Jen Sheng Magazine, Freeman, and in Hai Ch'ao Yin, a Buddhist magazine. A Taiwan newspaper item on March 3, 1958, stated that Mr. Tong intended to resign on account of this affair. He subsequently did re sign, though whether it was entirely because of this criticism is not clear.

He was succeeded by George Yeh, who strangely enough also spoke to a Christian youth gro in Washington on November 8, 1958. His statement is however a much more guarded statemen He speaks of members of the clergy being in prison "for refusing to preach their religion in the Marxist context," a statement to which even Y. T. Wu could hardly object, and then goes on t say that you cannot subject any religion to a political ideology. He concludes with these words "One may say that in Communist China today the worship of God, as we know it, no longer exists. Communism is basically God-less and atheistic. I look forward to the day, as, I am su you all do, when all religions, particularly the Christian faith, will again be worshipped in fre dom and peace."

MISSIONARY NEWS

Mrs. J. C. Jensen, formerly Baptist missionary in Szechuan, died in St. Louis on Decembe 21, 1958. Dr. Edward C. Perkins, formerly of the Methodist Water of Life Hospital in Kiukiang, died on October 30, 1958.